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fined to their homes. A man who does not frequently mix with his fellow men outside the house is branded as the 'man of the oven' while a woman who continually leaves her house is called 'strayer'. Men meet for their spontaneous gathering and gossip outside the house, while women meet inside. While women are expected to adorn themselves with earrings, nose rings, kohl for the eyes, finger rings, anklets, henna for the palms (almost an ornament for every sense), men are supposed to refrain. Moreover while men shave or cut their hair, women leave it to grow as long as possible and never cut it.[1] While men wear pants, women do not while women's speech is usually sprinkled with words in the diminutive, men are not expected to follow this habit; while women carry things on their heads, men never do so, and only carry things either in the hands, or on the back or shoulders. On walking along the village streets and alleyways, women keep near the wall, while men walk in the middle of the street. Although both men and women are fond of dramatizing their speech, yet they have different stylized ways of doing this. While men use their index fingers as a sign of threatening, women point out with their middle finger. Women grasp their chin or slap their face with open palms for surprise or regret or shame, while men slowly clap their hands. On being angry or hurt the woman's cry is 'Abouh, abouh . . .' and in joy her shrill cry is 'W[illegible]ri, ri . . .'. Men are not supposed to utter any cries of joy or anger. In threatening a man will threaten in default to cut off his moustache, while a woman threatens to cut off her head hair. Men and women use different invectives and imprecations as well as different greetings. Women in their speech draw out their words, whereas men end them abruptly. Women do not participate either in individual or communal worship in the mosque as they are excluded altogether from it, but there is no Koranic support for this. On the other hand, they are usually the performers of magico-religious rituals connected with averting the evil eye, bringing about pregnancy, or healing the sick; and men are less engaged in this sphere. It is also interesting to note that, as in Classical Arabic, the dialect of the village attached the feminine 'n' at the end of the verb in the third person feminine plural, a feature which does not occur in most of the urban dialects in Egypt.

Between men and women there is complete avoidance in looking at each other face to face, except in the case of certain kinships specified by the Koran. On meeting men in the street, women have always to turn their heads to one side, and pull their head covering across their face, and men are expected to lower their heads and not stare at women. The sex taboo on looking and talking without reserve does not apply to children till they reach the adolescent stage, when they gradually acquire such norms and begin to observe them as a part of their value system of politeness. On the other hand, very old women and men are freed from such restric-

[1] See Appendix VIII, for a boy who said that he would be ashamed if his hair grew long, presumably because it looks like that of girls.

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days is the piercing of the ridge of the ears 'while they are still soft'. The girl would have three holes in each ear, two at the top and one in the lobe, while the boy would have only two holes in the right ear, one at the top and one in the lobe. A thread is inserted into each hole so that the hole is not closed during the healing period. Immediately the punctures are healed, earrings are worn. The custom is gradually dying out in the case of boys, with the exception of the first son, whereas it is still universal with all the girls. Boys are expected to discard their silver earrings by the age of eight or nine while the girls do not discard them until they are replaced before marriage by larger golden earrings.

At the end of the second year, or normally after they are weaned, both boys and girls have their first haircut (for the girls it is actually the first and last). This is accompanied, in the case of a boy, by a dish of boiled maize called 'karama', to be eaten by whoever attends, usually small boys and poor people. The boy's head is left normally with three tufts of hair, one in the middle, and one on each side, the rest being shaved off by a razor. The girl is left with a large tuft on the top of the head, while the sides are shaved all round.

The care and handling of the infant are of great significance for this enquiry. Whenever the child is on his mother's lap, or astride her hip, or sitting or crawling beside her, he is always fussed over. Mother or visitors try to win a smile from the baby by tickling or caressing him, by turning his face outwards and then inwards and so on, or in the case of a boy by playing with his genitals. On other occasions they talk to the baby or make noises to attract his attention. A very common way of playing with the child is to support him under his arms, throw him upwards and then catch him, and this is repeated while singing to the child or talking to him.

The time of changing clothes or bathing the baby occasion the greatest amount of bodily stimulation, where not only the mother but perhaps the other children pass their hands over the child's body, calling him 'O thou fish, thy body is as smooth as the fish'. Moreover the amount of kissing on the mouth or on the cheeks that the infant experiences far exceeds any conjectures from the European point of view. Mothers have no objection to visitors kissing their children; on the contrary, it is supposed to be one of the means of 'feeling at home' to kiss the young children, or a good gesture of friendship.

As to the other features of development, such as walking and talking, the writer has found no significant differences between what he has seen in Silwa, and what he knows about the general stages of children's growth elsewhere. Here there is great variety; where some children can walk at the end of the first year, others walk a few months later; while some talk during the second year, others talk only during the third year.

The teaching of the child to walk and talk is not usually a matter for adults as much as for the older children, who usually take their siblings outside when they play. The adults do not take as active a part in teaching their children as do their older brothers or sisters.

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Koran, and readings of the Prophet's birthday story. During all this, the children would either be sitting behind the adults or clustered in one of the corners of the house ready to execute their elders' commands.

Later on, the actual circumcising of the boy takes place. The child is now the centre of attention. He sits on the ground with a colourful girl's headcloth round his neck, while the village barber shaves his head, a task which should occupy him for three or four hours before performing the operation. Meanwhile, as the women are rejoicing by singing and playing on the tambourine inside the house, the father's invited relatives and friends would be bringing along their contributions (nakout) of money or of corn. Every time the father receives a contribution, he tells an announcer, who is a specialist for this job, that so-and-so has delivered his contribution. The announcer in a chanting voice declares that so-and-so, adding his relationship to the child if he is a close relative, or just adding paternal uncle or maternal uncle, has presented the 'bridegroom' with silver and gold, and entreats God to compensate him with all the good things in the world. The name of one contributor might be announced more than once, and this depends on the amount of contribution, and the closeness of relationship to the child. After each contribution, the village barber shaves, or at least pretends to shave, a little more of the boy's hair. When the father sees that all those whom he has invited or expected to contribute have arrived, the announcer retires, by which time the barber has finished shaving the boy.[1] Then the actual circumcision takes place by seating the child on a large vessel. The instruments for the operation are nowadays given to the barber by the Ministry of Health as well as instructions and ointment for the post-operative treatment.

Just before the operation begins, the child casts off the girl's headcloth and puts on a new garment consisting of an open white shift covered by another open green garment, similar to the type of dress which a religious person is expected to wear on certain occasions. During the operation, the boy is encouraged not to cry or show any signs of pain, otherwise he would be accused of girlishness. He is held back, and forcibly prevented from looking at his penis, otherwise it is believed he would become impotent.

This is immediately followed by a procession of men and boys followed by women and girls to visit the mosque, after which a group of female relatives and friends of the mother, together with the children, take the child to gaze on the Nile water. During all this, sweets, dates, and peanuts would be distributed. For a whole week the child, wearing charms round his neck, is not encouraged to walk, and is fed not so much on bread or meat, but mainly on boiled eggs, dried peas, salted peanuts and rice.

After a week or ten days, the circumcised boy is taken with other boys on a round asking for the 'custom' (al-'ada) from relatives and neighbours, and friends in the village. On this occasion all the boys carry palm-tree

[1] If the boy is too young for a head shave, his older brother or cousin may take his place.

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men. One woman told me that a girl who beautifies herself will find difficulty in marriage and will have no 'lamah' (halo) about her to please her husband when married.

During adolescence, however, the girl would be prepared for marriage by tattooing her lower lip and by a special mode of hair style, distinguishable from the loose hanging hair of childhood. For tattooing the lip, a special woman is invited to prick the lip with a pack of needles smeared in black soot mixed with animal bile. The hair dressing of an adolescent girl and a woman is very much like that among the Sudanese women.[1] A special woman called 'mashata' plaits the hair into small tresses tightly covering the head. This style of hair makes a firm basis for fixing her ornaments on marriage, which are usually composed of three golden disks (dinar, pl. dananeer) that dangle over the forehead, and a silver chain connected to the ends of the hair at the back.

It is during adolescence also that boys show the greatest interest in singing, and for this purpose they form the so-called 'circle of romance boys' (awlad al hawa). In these circles, held usually in summer, on festive occasions, weddings and circumcision, youths give vent to their new interest in love. They perform by standing in a circle with one taking the lead by singing a song while the other boys listen. On finishing, they repeat in chorus the last line again and again, clapping their hands rhythmically till the first singer or another youth starts another song. Some of these songs are composed extemporaneously, while others are old ones repeated. The following three examples are typical of the songs sung:

Ya bit ya um ghawaish,
khallaiti 'agli taish,
nassaitini al ma'aish,
Chorus: Wi dmoui 'al'ashik 'al khaddain.

O thou girl with bracelets,
thou hast rendered my mind crazy,
and hast made me neglect my work.
Chorus: And the tears of the lover are on the cheeks.

. . . . .

Rakbah min foag wasil,
tihki bil hasil,
mafeesh adab wasil.
Chorus: 'Ala annabi wahhid wi salli.

She is on the top (on the roof),
telling what has happened,
she has no politeness at all.
Chorus: Say God is one and pray for the Prophet.

[1] Cf. Sophie Zenovsky, 'Marriage Customs in Omdurman', in *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXVI, Part ii, 1945, p. 244.

585 Behind this small gathering of men and a great crowd of children, followed the female procession crying out shrills and singing.

[431] After the evening prayer the bridegroom offered a meal to those who were in the procession, as well as others who were invited, after which contributions from men began to be received in the 'haircutting' ceremony. The details of announcement of contributions are exactly the same as those described earlier for the circumcision ceremony.[2] While the bridegroom or 'The Prince', as he is usually called on such an occasion, was [302] having his hair cut, the circle of 'the boys of romance'[3] was in full swing outside the house; other adolescent boys were engaged in mock fighting with their staves.

As the contribution ceremony ended, the crowd of boys stopped their organized playing and singing and showed signs of excitement and anticipation for the next event, when the bridegroom in his best clothes, a dagger tied to his waist and a stick in hand, had to go to meet the bride. Immediately the bridegroom came out of the house, another procession was organized. The procession was led by a strong youth taking a camel-load of wheat, corn, lentils and beans which was to be the bridegroom's provisions for three months. The bridegroom himself was amidst a group of his friends, who were reciting the traditional song of: 'O God, Praise our Prophet; our hearts love him because he will save us from Hell.' At the very rear came the procession of women, and the whole procession moved towards the bride's house.

As the singing and beating of the drums were heard by the bride's people, they came out with her, face and body covered, and in the care of her mother and the midwife, with another girl walking beside them carrying candles and corn on a tray on her head. Other women and girls were following in a state of great excitement. When the two processions met, the midwife took the bride to the bridegroom. On her face being uncovered to see him, he was prepared to sprinkle her face with some milk which he had in his mouth and would expel with force.[1] At this moment the excitement reached its peak as the boys around the bridegroom sang at the top of their voices, 'The roses are blossoming. She is rightfully thine, she is rightfully thine.'[2]

[518] The tension between the bridegroom's maternal and paternal relations reached its highest a short time later when the traditional mock fight began over the loaded camel. This fight usually takes place just in front of the bride's house, where some boys belonging to the bridegroom's family try to take the camel back to where it came from, while other boys from the bride's family try to prevent them from doing so and lead the camel to

[1] It is by no means the first time the bride and bridegroom saw each other, which might be inferred from such a ritual.

[2] It is one of the signs of a 'good man' not to show any signs of embarrassment, and to be able to aim the milk right at the bride's face, otherwise he would be chaffed about it. [518] On this occasion, although the bridegroom did this job properly, he was not spared some criticism especially from those who were in favour of a marriage with his paternal cousin.

[2] [See Category 116, P. 117 -- Analyst]
[3] [See Category 116, P. 186 -- Analyst]

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and with them it is possibly a racial mark, but the following information was given to me by an Egyptian woman whom I questioned on the subject. Among the *fellāḥīn* the notches are cut when there is supposed to be something wrong with the inside of a child's mouth, and the operation is performed in babyhood. A midwife acts as the surgeon in such cases. She cuts the notch, or notches, with a pair of scissors, and the blood from the wound is rubbed on the roof of the child's mouth. If the mouth is very bad more than one notch is cut.

Long hair is certainly considered a woman's glory in Egypt, though I have rarely, if ever, seen really thick, long hair among the *fellāḥīn* women and girls. However, this defect is easily remedied, and every woman buys long plaits of false hair, which hang down far below her waist. She cuts her hair short on either side of her face, and forms this short hair into flat curls against her cheeks. Over her head she ties a silk or cotton kerchief, a brightly coloured one if she is young, a more sombre one if she has passed her youth, and this keeps the side curls in position. The hair is not dressed every day, but when it is done a double wooden comb is used (Fig. 26), with fine and coarse teeth. The centre of the comb is usually decorated with coloured designs.

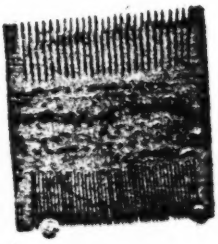

FIG. 26. DOUBLE WOODEN COMB

The long plaits worn by the peasant women are utilitarian as well as decorative. The house-door key is often attached to one of the plaits when the housewife goes off either to shop or to the fields, while from the others hang various charms, some of which are enclosed in small leather cases. One woman I know wore a charm against headache enclosed in a leather case, and also a large opaque bead to keep her husband's love and to make his mother pleased with her. Both these charms were attached to one of her plaits, and she gave me the bead after her husband died.

When a woman becomes a widow she immediately conceals the side curls; in fact, no hair must be seen round her face—it is tucked away under a dark blue or a black kerchief. She wears it like this all her life, unless she remarries, in which case the curls

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again appear, and the mourning kerchief is replaced by one of brighter hue. Should a woman do this before her second husband is secured the whole village knows that she is anxious to marry again.

Women, especially when the hair begins to turn grey, often dye it with *ḥenna*, which stains it a bright red. This may be done by a woman who, wishing to obtain another husband, endeavours to obliterate the signs of advancing years. One day when visiting a village where I have often stayed for many weeks at a time I saw an old crone performing her toilet on the roof of her house. She was combing out her very scanty locks, which were dyed a bright red. Unfortunately, she had not been altogether successful with her hair-tinting, for considerable patches of white hair were still plainly visible. I asked a woman friend of mine, in whose house I was sitting, if the old woman wanted to marry again. She laughed, and said that she believed that this was so! I never heard that she met with any sort of success in that direction!

The men either have their hair cut quite short, or else they have the head shaved altogether. Some of them, however, leave one lock of hair at the back of the head, allowing it to grow quite long, even though the rest of the head may be closely shaved. One man told me that he wore this lock of hair so that when he died the men who washed him might not have to touch his head, but could hold it by this lock. I gathered that he thought that it would defile him if they caught hold of his head, but I am not sure about this point. My brother, Dr A. M. Blackman, tells me that a man told him that the object of the lock was to prevent those who washed a corpse from raising the head by putting a hand into the mouth and so possibly defiling the dead.

The men usually shave all the hair off the face, except the moustache. Old men, however, frequently allow the beard to grow, as it is looked upon as a mark of honour at that time of life. Most of the body hair of both sexes is shaved off, to ensure ceremonial purity.

A child often has the hair shaved off just above the forehead. In some parts of Egypt this is considered to be a good thing for the eyes, as it is believed that the hair growing on that part of the head is injurious to the eyesight when the child is very young. The shaven portion is often covered with *ḥenna*. Another special

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form of hair-cutting for very young boys is dealt with in the following chapter.

After a death the male relatives of the deceased will often allow the hair on the face and head to grow for some time as a sign of mourning.

An Egyptian woman who fears that her facial beauty is beginning to fade, and who wishes to obliterate lines on her face and to obtain a nice pink complexion, will proceed in the following way. She takes a quantity of sugar and a little alum, and boils them together in a small quantity of water till the concoction becomes thick and brown like toffee; the pan is then removed from the fire. When the toffee-like substance is cool enough she takes some of it and pinches it up between her fingers and thumb and applies it to her face, where it sticks; she then pulls it off. She massages the whole of her face in this way, or she may get a friend to do it for her (see Fig. 27), till the skin becomes very pink and also the soft, downy hairs are pulled out. Her husband, on coming home, will admire her complexion and be 'pleased' (*mabsūṭ*) with her, and the woman herself will thus be gratified. I know a woman who, in order to excite her husband's admiration, treats her face in this way every day! After being thus massaged the face is washed with pink soap, and then a pink powder may also be applied. Many of the vainer of the peasant women regularly make use of this treatment in order to beautify themselves. I have myself seen the face

FIG. 27. WOMAN HAVING HER FACE MASSAGED

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being treated in this manner, and it seemed to be a somewhat painful process. However, "*Il faut souffrir pour être belle*," and these women do endure considerable discomfort in the course of their toilet.

The toffee-like substance described above is also used by women in a similar way in order to pull out any hairs that may be growing on their legs.

Most women and girls paint round the eyes with antimony (Arabic, *koḥl*). It is kept in a small bottle, generally of glass, called *mikḥaleh*, and is applied with a short stick with a blunt point. It is regarded not only as a beautifier, but also as a cure for sore eyes.

Scent is used by both sexes, some of it being of a very pungent nature. In some parts of Egypt it is taboo for a man to use scent while his wife is suckling her child. If he disobeys this rule the child, it is said, will come out all over in spots. A man whom I knew well used some scent on one occasion while his wife was still suckling their youngest-born. The child got nasty spots all over its body, and the mother told me that it was her husband's fault, because he had been putting some scent on his moustache!

I have sometimes heard English people remark on the dirty habit that the Egyptian peasant women have of wearing long dresses which trail over the ground, brushing up the dust in clouds as they go along. It is, of course, a very insanitary practice, but the wearing of short skirts would be looked upon as most immodest. A woman's legs should never be exposed, except from dire necessity. There is also another reason for the trailing skirts. Most peasant women walk barefooted, and so leave clearly defined footprints in the dry, dusty soil. A woman can be injured magically through her footprints, and so the long skirt acts as a safeguard, brushing over and thus obliterating them.

Little girls wear very bright-coloured cotton frocks, which reach almost to the ground (see Fig. 17). The women and older girls may wear such frocks indoors, but when they walk abroad, either to shop, to fill their water-jars, or to visit their friends, they wear a long black dress over the coloured one, and a thick veil, shawl-shaped, over their heads.

I was told by a friend some few years ago that in Sharḳīyeh Province the women wear long white veils, on which are several gold or silver ornaments. These ornaments are in the form of

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291 money, usually the Egyptian pound, and, according to my in-
301 formant, they represent the money given to the bride before her
554 marriage; thus the wealth of a woman may be estimated by look-
ing at her veil. I have not yet visited Sharḳīyeh Province, and have therefore not had the opportunity of verifying this statement myself.

291 To draw the veil over the lower part of the face is a sign of respect
554 for superiors, as well as a means of concealing the face from the gaze of men. For the former reason the women when passing me in the roads usually draw the veil over the face, however old they
[302 may be. Black and dark blue are mourning colours, and a dress
765 of the latter colour is always worn in the house by a widow in place
589] of the brighter coloured one which she wore before her husband died. She also wears a dark blue kerchief on her head, with a black veil over it when out of doors.

291 Men do not make any change in their attire after losing a relative,
302 but some, as I have already stated, refrain from shaving, and let
765 the head and facial hair grow long for some time after the death of a near, and especially a male, relative.

291 The loose, flowing robes of both men and women are admirably adapted to the climate, and it is much to be hoped that the custom of wearing the native dress will not die out. Much of the picturesqueness of the country would go if European dress became the fashion in Egyptian villages, and, moreover, the native costume is infinitely healthier and more comfortable in the hot, dry climate of the Nile Valley.

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of rings. On one of the baskets is placed a large winnowing sieve, in which the child sleeps all night. When the midwife comes on the following morning, and both mother and child have been washed, some of the grains from one of the baskets are put in the sieve, the baby also being placed in it. The midwife then tosses and shakes the baby in the sieve, its mother meanwhile banging the edge of the metal basin with a tin mug. The striking of the basin by the mother is not, I believe, always done, but on one occasion when I was present at this ceremony the mother acted in this way. The tossing and shaking of the child in the sieve is repeated several times, after which the grains are returned to the basket. The midwife now takes the child in her arms, and covers it with a cloth of white cotton on which are placed some of the grains from one of the baskets. Having first carried the child into all the rooms on the ground floor, she then goes outside the house, sprinkling some of the grains wherever she walks, and repeating "*Ṣalla 'a 'n-Nebi*" ("Bless the Prophet") over and over again during the whole of her perambulation.

FIG. 37. UMBILICAL CORD IN COTTON WRAPPING, AND OTHER CHARMS SUSPENDED FROM IT

Left to right: twisted iron wire, string of seven grains of beans, and bag containing samples of the seven ingredients of one of the baskets.

The child is now taken back into the mother's room, and the midwife blackens its eyes with *kohl*, a bottle of which she has brought with her. She dips a feather into the *kohl*, and, having opened the child's eyes, passes the feather across each of them in turn. After thus painting the eyes she fastens round the child's neck the cotton case containing a piece of the umbilical cord, to which are

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attached a string of seven grains of beans and a little cotton bag containing a small quantity of the seven ingredients of one of the baskets (Fig. 37).

The midwife's fee consists of a large basket (Fig. 38) of maize, bread, dates, various nuts, and occasionally a little money.[1]

Some of the six various grains, together with the salt, are often given to the father to scatter over his fields. This is a fertility charm, and is believed to ensure his having good crops.

FIG. 38. MIDWIFE CARRYING HER WAGES ON HER HEAD

In addition to the charms mentioned above, the child sometimes has another one made of thick iron wire twisted into a particular shape (Fig. 37). This is also hung round the child's neck, but only so if, when it cries, it clenches its hands and shakes itself.

In some parts of Upper Egypt the following mixture is put into a child's eyes by the midwife on the seventh day. The woman brings an onion with her and squeezes the juice from it into a small coffee-cup, mixing with it salt, oil, and, usually, *kohl* also. Then, taking a feather, she dips it into the mixture and, opening the child's eyes, brushes the feather right across them. It is believed that this will give the child wide open and beautiful eyes.

The naming of the child is part of the seventh-day ceremony. If the parents are anxious to discover the best and luckiest name for their offspring they proceed as follows. Candles, usually four

[1] Sometimes she is, I believe, paid only in grain.

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forty days old and a girl eighty before they can receive this sacrament.[1]

Exception to this rule is made in cases of grave illness. According to my informant, the water for baptism is contained in a tank in the ground. After asking the mother what name is to be given to the child the priest dips the infant into the water three times, each time repeating the name chosen for it. The child is then returned to its mother, who dresses it, and then the priest takes a silken thread, which the mother has brought with her, and places it round the child, passing it under its left arm. He then ties this thread into a knot with a loop. A certain number of prayers are repeated, after which a few drops of the Eucharistic wine are given to the child to drink. Most of the people who have been present at this ceremony now take their departure, but the parents, with the child, remain in the church while the choir sing certain chants. The priest then questions the parents as to their willingness to bring up the child with a knowledge of the Christian religion, impressing on them how great their responsibility is with regard to the proper religious instruction of their child.

When the ceremony is over the parents give the priest some money, the amount varying according to their means, and then the priest unties the knot he made in the silken thread.

In all Egyptian villages a number of little boys may be seen with their heads shaved save for a few tufts of hair, which are left untouched. Each of such tufts is dedicated, in the case of Muslims, to a sheikh, or to a saint if the child's parents are Copts, or sometimes all the tufts are dedicated to one sheikh or saint. I am told that there is no *special* age for the hair to be cut in this way, but I believe it is always done in very early childhood, probably as soon as the hair has grown, for I have never seen any but young children with these tufts of hair left on their heads. The ceremonial cutting off of the tufts is not, so far as I have discovered, performed at any particular age of boyhood, but the date of the performance seems to depend on whether the father can afford the expense that the ceremony entails, such expense in some parts of Upper Egypt being considerable. It has never been suggested to me that the ceremony takes place when the boy has reached the age of puberty. Indeed, as far as my own experience goes, the tufts were removed long before that period was reached.

[1] *The Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt* (Oxford, 1884), vol. ii, p. 263.

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When it is desired that the tufts shall be shaved off quite an important ceremony takes place—at least, according to my informant, in Asyūṭ Province. When possible the child is taken to the tomb or tombs of the sheikh or sheikhs to whom the tufts of hair are dedicated, and the tufts are removed just within, or just outside, the sacred building (Fig. 39), or the child may be taken to a mosque, where the ceremony can also be performed. If the child is a Copt it is taken to the church or churches named after the saint or saints to whom these tufts of hair have been dedicated. In the case of the Muslims the village barber is called in to remove the hair, but with the Copts a priest performs the rite. The removal of these tufts takes place if possible when the hair is four to five centimetres long, but in parts of Upper Egypt the ceremony is so expensive for a poor *fellāh* that the child may have to wait some time longer before the tufts can be removed. Bread and meat are taken to the tombs or mosques where the ceremony is to be performed, and then a feast is held to the accompaniment of dancing, beating of the drum (*darābukkeh*), hand-clapping, and *zaghārīṭ*.[1] The barber on these occasions may demand quite a large sum of money, and altogether the ceremony rarely costs less than six pounds, often more.

E [29] [532] [142]

FIG. 39. CHILD ABOUT TO HAVE ITS TUFTS OF HAIR CUT OFF AT THE TOMB OF THE SHEIKH UMBĀRAK

The man on the right is the barber.

FC [262]

FC [465]

F [152]

[1] The shrill cries of joy uttered by women on all festive occasions.

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I myself witnessed the performance of the rite in Fayūm Province, where the proceedings were simpler. The child whose tufts were to be removed was taken to the tomb of the sheikh Umbārak, to whom they had all been dedicated. The barber arrived and shaved off the hair just within the entrance to the tomb. On this occasion the child was held by the sister-in-law of the child's mother, but I do not think there is any fixed rule as to who should act in this capacity. There was no feast or dancing, but such festivities may take place also in this province, though they are not necessary, as I was told was the case in Asyūṭ Province. The child's mother is a friend of mine, and as I paid the barber's fee myself I managed, with the assistance of the woman who held the child, to secure half the hair that had been cut off. The cut-off hair is always buried outside the tomb or mosque where it has been cut off, and is put in the ground either loose [1] or else is first enclosed in a clay ball. On the occasion when I was present at this ceremony the hair was enclosed in a clay ball and buried outside the sheikh Umbārak's tomb, and half was kept back and put in another clay ball and presented to me. The ball in my possession is somewhat flattened at the base, owing to the fact that the clay of which it is made was rather moist, and the placing of the ball outside the house to sun-bake naturally flattened that portion which rested on the ground.

As stated above, Coptic parents take their children to have the tufts removed at the church or churches, or sometimes it may be to the tomb or tombs, of the saint or saints to whom the tufts of hair are dedicated. The priest, as has also been stated, officiates as barber, the father presenting a gift of money to the church or churches where the tufts are removed. On such an occasion a special service is held at the church, and oxen and fowls are killed outside the building, the meat, together with bread, being distributed among the assembled crowd of friends and the poor. If the parents are not rich enough to supply such a munificent feast they will bring a smaller quantity of meat with them, and will distribute it and the bread to the crowds which always collect outside the building on these occasions; in such cases no sacrifices are made. Among the Copts no dancing takes place at this ceremony as among the Muslims, but the women utter the cries of joy (*zaghārīṭ*), and there is a good deal of singing.

I have been told that if a woman remains for a long time after

[1] See my article in *Man*, vol. xxv, Pl. E, Fig. 4.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

I have been told that if a woman remains for a long time after marriage without the prospect of a child she will pray for a son, promising that, in the event of her prayer being answered, she will have the boy's hair shaved, leaving only the tufts, which she will dedicate to the sheikh or sheikhs, or to the saint or saints, with whom she has interceded. When offering such prayers she will probably repair to the tomb of the sheikh, or to the church of the Coptic saint, to whom she wishes to appeal. I was told in Fayūm Province that if a boy is seen with his hair cut into tufts it means that he is an only son, and that this style of headdress will ensure him a long life. The initial cutting of the hair, it should be pointed out, is performed at home.

Among the Copts the rite of circumcision should be observed before baptism, according to Dr Butler.[1] The actual ceremony closely resembles the Muslim rite, so that the following description applies to the followers of both religions, the only difference being that whereas the Coptic child should have this operation before baptism, for the Muslim there is no limitation as to age, though it is always carried out during the early years of a child's life. The ceremony entails a certain expense, and is therefore sometimes carried out conjointly with a marriage ceremony, so that the cost may be shared.

The boy who is to undergo this operation has his hands and feet dyed with *ḥenna* at sunset two days before it takes place. On the following day the barber comes and cuts the boy's hair in a particular way, called *mukarraṣ*, which means 'made into little loaves or cakes.' I do not think that this form of hairdressing is in any way connected with the tufts of hair described above. After the haircutting the boy is washed, and, so I was told, coins are put on his face. This is probably the same custom as is observed at weddings, when the female visitors who wish to present the bride with small sums of money go up to her and place the coin they wish to give to her on her upturned face. In the case of the boy the money presented in this way is taken by the barber. The boy then has a particular kind of felt cap placed on his head. This cap, which is white in colour, decorated with yellow designs and tassels (Fig. 40), is purchased by the parents especially for the occasion, and worn only for this rite. The cap is further decorated by the attachment of scraps of coloured paper or bits of cloth or muslin. The boy, thus attired, is then placed on a horse, usually, I believe, with his face toward the animal's tail; he is covered up with a shawl, and, with one man holding him securely and another leading

F 782 842
F [778]
F [761]
F C 852 304
E [302]
E [463]
E [431] [465]
F C [292]

[1] See my article in *Man*, vol. xxv, p. 263.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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mourning, which could easily be distinguished by the number of men seated outside it; these observed almost complete silence, instead of carrying on an animated conversation as they would have done in happier circumstances.

I was courteously received by the men and conducted to the apartment in which the women were assembled. The house was one of the type always to be found in Egyptian villages, built of crude bricks, and with steep, rough steps inside the building leading up to the roof. In the first room which we entered lay the coffin—a long, narrow box, made of planks of wood hastily nailed together, over which was stretched a covering of black cloth decorated with white crosses and other designs in *appliqué*. We passed through this room into an inner apartment, in which a large number of women were sitting on the ground, uttering from time to time piercing cries of grief. The sister of the dead man came toward me, her hair and dress dishevelled. As she advanced she swayed from side to side in a kind of dance, keeping both arms extended. She at once conducted me into a small room which led out of that occupied by the women. It was dark except for a glimmer of light which penetrated through the half-open door. A mattress was on the floor—indeed, it occupied most of the available space—and on it was stretched the body of the dead man, covered with a coloured sheet. From the end of the room, which was in pitch darkness, came the piercing cries of wailing women. Presently the sister drew aside the coverlet and invited me to take a seat on the mattress beside the dead man. This was no doubt very polite of her, but it was rather more than I could stand—not that I feared the dead, but because the mattress was almost certain to be covered with vermin. I managed to evade the offer without hurting anyone's feelings, and returned to the larger concourse of women in the adjoining room. Each of these women had a coloured handkerchief—green, blue, or purple, or some of these colours combined—such as are carried by women at all funerary ceremonies. Some of them possessed two such handkerchiefs knotted together. They held them in front of them, stretched out at full length, and as they swayed from side to side, wailing and bemoaning the dead, they would wave the handkerchiefs up and down. The faces of the women, as well as their hands and arms, were smeared with blue dye.

Presently I went out to speak to the men, who evidently dis-

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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in vogue in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom (2160–1788 B.C.) is definitely proved by a blue faience figure of a girl dating from the Eleventh to Thirteenth Dynasty and by the mummies of two girls dating from the Eleventh Dynasty. Both the mummies and the faience figure have tattoo marks on the body and the limbs.[1]

Either locks of false hair fastened on, or whole wigs, were commonly used by the ancient Egyptian women.[2] The long plaits of hair worn by the modern peasant women (p. 56) can certainly be matched in ancient times;[3] Professor Petrie found a long plait of hair and a false fringe even in a First-Dynasty royal tomb at Abydos.[4] We have no indication, however, that the plaits served the same utilitarian purposes that they often serve nowadays (see p. 56)! It is to be observed that the wooden combs used to-day in dressing the hair (p. 56, Fig. 26) are very like the ancient ones (Fig. 156).

FIG. 156. ANCIENT COMB
After A. Erman and H. Ranke, *Aegypten und aegyptisches Leben im Altertum*, Pl. 19, 1.

The painting of the eyes with *koḥl* was practised as much in ancient times as it is at the present day (p. 59), and by both men and women. In a satirical papyrus dating from the later New Kingdom, and now preserved in the Turin Museum, there is a caricature of a woman looking into a hand-mirror and 'making up.'[5] The constant references to perfumes in the ancient religious and literary texts[6] make it evident that the modern love of scent (p. 59) is not a recently acquired taste.

[1] H. E. Winlock, "The Egyptian Expedition, 1922–1923," Part II of *The Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*, December, 1923, pp. 22, 26, 28.
[2] A. Erman, *op. cit.*, pp. 153, 248; G. Elliot Smith and Warren R. Dawson, *Egyptian Mummies* (London, 1924), p. 117, Fig. 33.
[3] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
[4] W. M. F. Petrie, *Abydos*, Part I (London, 1902), Pl. IV, Fig. 7.
[5] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 258.
[6] *E.g.* A. Erman, *op cit.*, pp. 28, 33, 61, 133, 209, 244, 247, 249, 252.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ANALOGIES

FA 302 A [463]

The men's custom of cutting the hair short or shaving their heads entirely (p. 57) is very ancient. Paintings of barbers shaving or cropping men's heads occur in two tomb-chapels of the Middle [1] and in one of the New Kingdom.[2] In the New Kingdom painting (Fig. 157) the barbers are quite clearly plying their trade out of doors, as they so often do at the present day. The well-known *Instruction of Duauf* speaks of the barber shaving "late into the evening, . . . he betaketh himself from street to street in order to seek him whom he may shave." [3]

FIG. 157. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BARBERS AT WORK
After W. Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, Pl. 44.

The custom of shaving off the body hair (p. 57) is certainly ancient. Herodotus,[4] it is true, speaks of it only in connexion with the priests, but there is some evidence that it was practised by both sexes, as at the present day.[5] Herodotus [6] tells us that "the Egyptians, on occasions of death, let the hair grow both on the head and on the face, though till then wont to shave." This custom still obtains, as can be seen from my statements on p. 58.

FA [765]

Two articles of clothing, the veil for women and the *gallabīyeh*, may be quite ancient. There is possibly a reference to the former

FA 291 A [113]

[1] See L. Klebs, *Die Reliefs und Malereien des mittleren Reiches* (Heidelberg, 1922), p. 41; *cf.* also A. Erman, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[2] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, Pl. 20, Fig. 1; W. Wreszinski, *op. cit.*, Pl. 44.
[3] A. Erman, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
[4] ii, 37.
[5] See A. M. Blackman, "Purification (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, pp. 477, 481; *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. x, p. 200.
[6] ii, 36.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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"found the gods waiting, wrapped in their garments, their white sandals on their feet. Then cast they their sandals to the ground, then threw they off their garments. 'Our heart was not glad until thou camest,' said they."

FA C 852 302

The custom of shaving, in performance of a vow, a boy's head save for a number of tufts, which are dedicated to one or more Muslim or Coptic saints, and of ceremonially cutting off the tufts when they have grown to a certain length (pp. 84 ff.), is evidently very ancient. Clay balls containing infantile hair, such as are

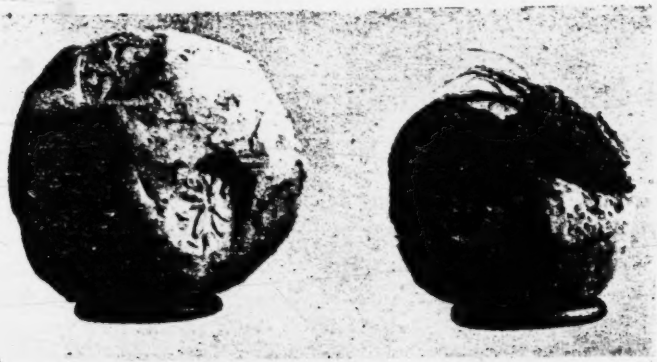

FIG. 161. ANCIENT CLAY BALLS FROM EL-'AMARNEH, ONE BROKEN AND SHOWING INFANTILE HAIR INSIDE

described on p. 86, have been found both at el-'Amarneh (Fig. 161) and in a Twentieth-Dynasty tomb at el-Lāhūn.[1] Herodotus[2] seems to be referring to this or some very similar custom when he says:

> All the inhabitants of the cities perform their vows to the keepers [of the sacred animals] in the following manner. Having made a vow to the god to whom the animal belongs, they shave either the whole heads of their children, or a half, or a third of the head, and then weigh the hair in a scale against silver, and whatever the weight may be, they give to the keeper of the animals; and she in return cuts up some fish, and gives it as food to the animals. Such is the usual mode of feeding them.

FA 304

Circumcision (pp. 87 f.) seems to have been practised universally in ancient times (as it is in modern Egypt) until the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, when it was restricted to candidates for the

A [113]

[1] W. S. Blackman, *Man*, vol. xxv, pp. 65 ff.
[2] ii, 65.

He has rather large, flattish feet and his average height is about 5 ft. 6 ins. 142

The women are similar, but in proportion. They seem, however, to preserve the original type more purely. (24)

These are the features of a single race and of a single type. As with all living things, varieties are not wanting, but they are never wildly different from the norm. For example, the cranial index (about 75) is one point higher in Lower Egypt. There is a slight tendency to the Negroid type as Nubia is approached. Maqrizi and 'Abdel Latîf had already noted this in the fourteenth century, and any traveller who gets as far as Aswan can see it for himself. The *Sa'îdi*, or Upper Egyptian, who lives in a drier and hotter climate, is taller, more bronzed, and more vigorous and muscular than the fellah of the Delta. [141]

(2) *Care and Clothing of the Body*

The fellah is not a hairy type of man. He wears his hair cut short, except when in mourning for a male of his household; but he likes to wear a moustache as a sign of virility. In childhood his head is clean-shaven, apart from the ritual tuft. When he becomes old and venerable he lets his beard grow. 302 [888]

The women's hair is too much neglected to be plentiful. Their meagre locks are sometimes tied up with russet or black ribbons, but always hidden under the veil or gathered into a kerchief. [291]

Since the earliest times both sexes have removed the body hair with either a razor or a paste of sugar and alum. 302 304

Like all ancient peoples with a long tradition, the fellaheen mark their skin with designs ritual, aesthetic and hygienic, which have been handed down from time immemorial. Incision and all forms of coloration are intended not only for ornament, but also as charms and prophylactics.

Girls have the lobes of both ears pierced, and sometimes the side of one nostril. These perforations are kept open by a thread until the ear- or nose-ring is inserted. 304 463

All boys, Moslem as well as Coptic, are circumcised with great ceremony by the village barber.

F
304 Sometimes, though less commonly nowadays, young girls have the clitoris excised. In some regions boys have their right ears pierced.

The fellaheen do not gash their cheeks like the Nubians (Berberines), but they colour themselves, especially by tattooing, which is perhaps the main distinguishing mark of the fellaheen, and is applied to men and women alike in adolescence.

In the middle of the forehead or the chin, on the temples
F or the backs of the hands, appear dots or geometrical patterns;
[532] and on the chest, back or forearm there may be rough designs,
C such as a sword or tree, a name or a date, and for the Copts
[532 a cross more or less floriated. This tattooing is rarely found
304] lower than the waist, and is never obscene.

F
304 The work is done by a specialist, usually a Bedouin of
463 the same sex as the patient. The operation takes place in the open, at a street corner on market-day. The method is very primitive and causes painful swellings. The tattooer traces the lines of the pattern selected at a chosen spot on the skin with a *style* made of five to seven needles bound together, or with a sort of pricking stamp. Then he colours the bleeding pattern with lamp-black mixed in oil or spirit. An indelible greenish tint is thus obtained.

F
302 The use of henna (*lawsonia inermis*) to dye the hair, hands, feet or perhaps only the nails, is a characteristically Egyptian affectation. It goes back to the Twentieth Dynasty, and Islam has encouraged it (37). The application of henna is a delicate affair. A poultice, made with the powdered leaves, has to be applied hot and kept on from three to twenty-four hours according to quality. This produces a reddish-orange or brown colouring, which lasts about a fortnight.

F
302 Widows dye their hair with henna, to appear younger
587 and attract a second husband. Young women use it to
515 clean their heads and kill lice, to stop hair from coming out, and to make themselves pretty. The shaven heads of children are reddened with henna as a hygienic precaution. The hands, feet and fingernails of the women are only so coloured once or twice a year, at the great festivals.

F
302 *Kohl* (38) is used to blacken the eyelids and eyebrows, and make the eyes look larger; its function is both decorative

and hygienic. There is no woman who does not use this inexpensive cosmetic, both for herself and for her children. On a holiday or when she is tired, she neatly applies it with a kind of stylet dipped into the phial of black.

Circumcision is a therapeutic, tattooing a scarification, henna a poultice, *kohl* an eye-salve; for these aesthetic devices also serve the fellaheen as preventives or remedies. At the same time they also represent magical rites: circumcision is an act of consecration, tattooing has a symbolic value, henna is a commemorative, *kohl* keeps off the evil eye. Thus a luxury is never devoid of meaning or utility.

The fellaheen do not bathe for pleasure or for cleanliness. They have enough contact with water at their work, or in their Moslem ritual ablutions (30). Every evening these ablutions of hands, feet, face and private parts assure, at least to the men, a minimum of cleanliness. The children splash about naked as soon as they can, or whenever the beasts have to be watered. The women go into the water dressed and in groups, to wash their dirty clothes and themselves at the same time. For this they use clay or a piece of wood, and occasionally soap. In many villages the women never have a thorough wash, except on the occasion of their marriage, and once a year at the Great Bairam.

The dress of the fellaheen constitutes the distinguishing mark of Egypt. While many everyday actions and customs are common to the peasantry of all countries, or at least to all those who are poor, or live in Moslem lands, the fellah differs from them all in his manner of dress, which is immediately recognisable. Yet there is nothing picturesque or fanciful about it, no complication or embroidery such as distinguishes the village dress of Syria and Palestine.

The men wear on their heads the simplest form of covering, a mere skull-cap, which gives no protection against the sun. This brownish felt cap or *libda* is so distinctive of the poor fellah that its very name has furnished him with a title. He is often called *abu libda*, the fellow with a cap, figuring in many a popular tale. Sometimes, and in the case of boys almost always, the cap is made of white calico (*taqiya*). On special occasions, if the fellah is better off or more pious, particularly in the south, he will wind round his cap a long white cloth which serves to protect his neck. This is due to Moslem influence. A good *libda* is deep, and should come

functions of grocer and druggist, café-keeper and innkeeper, money-lender and banker. He is the most Egyptianised of Europeans. He has no objection to living right in the village, among the fellaheen if not with them, and on them if not for them. He has brought into this closed world the gramophone and the games of the West. He robs the fellaheen and teaches them the use of narcotics, but he is unfailingly obliging. Though his rates are exorbitant, he will lend money on request without asking too many questions. He sells on credit, and when he buys he pays cash. The fellaheen appreciate his resourcefulness and enterprise.

Other less important but more popular figures stand out from the mass by virtue of some well-defined social functions long sanctified by custom.

First comes the *mizayen* or barber-surgeon. He is a very busy man. He shaves all the fellaheen of his district once a month, and crops their hair. Squatting in front of his client, who also squats, he takes a dish of water between his knees, and an old razor between finger and thumb, and quickly tidies up the face and head. An aching tooth? He will pull it out. Cupping, scarification, purge? No difficulty at all. He is responsible for public health, and therefore performs vaccinations, and notifies deaths to the '*omda*. The *mizayen* also officiates at circumcisions, and on the eve of this operation, or of a wedding, the hair-cutting takes on something of a ritual significance. He surrounds it with ceremony, and in so doing dignifies his art. For his varied services he is paid either in kind at harvest time or in milliemes.

The magician or sorcerer, with his charms, his formulae, his perfumed sachets and his magic remedies, would be a serious rival to the *mizayen*, were it not that his credulous customers are chiefly women. He may live in the village or merely pass through. It is to him that the country women have recourse in order to get the help of jinns, to cast spells, to counteract the evil eye or to ensure conception. No-one can make them believe that this holy man is just a rascal and an impostor. The more magic babble he puts into his rites, the more confidence they place in him. Indeed there are many instances in which trickery is not a sufficient explanation for the effects produced. A whole book might be written on witchcraft in the village, and its affinity

father or grandmother (who wields great authority), a married son, and some cousin or other on a prolonged visit. 592

When a fellah wishes to get married, if he is of age he deals directly with the girl's father and pays him the price. If he is young, that is less than eighteen, his mother will try to find him the ideal bride among her relations or neighbours, almost always in the same district. The girl will be fourteen or fifteen years of age, and by no means ignorant of the facts of life. The law of 1923, however, has fixed sixteen as the age of marriage (**). 584 [831] 582

The betrothal is celebrated by proxy in a contract of marriage (*'aqd*). The dowry (*mahr*) which the man must offer varies between L.E. 5 and L.E. 10. He pays two thirds down, and binds himself to pay the rest by a document drawn up by the *maazûn* or the *'omda*. 583 584

With this money the girl's parents go to the market-town to buy her trousseau, consisting of a red wedding-dress and gold bracelets (costing L.E. 1 or L.E. 2), and for furniture a water-jug, two copper cooking-pots (*halla*), a tub (*tisht*), a round table (*tablia*), and a brightly coloured chest cased in zinc. If the *mahr*, is large enough, they will also buy a mattress stuffed with cotton or straw, one or two pillows, and a quilted coverlet (*lihâf*).

On the wedding-day, that is to say the day the bride leaves her father's house to go to her husband's, all these things are loaded on to a camel hired for the occasion, and paraded round the village. The young girls go before and after, singing and clapping their hands, and the villagers admire the treasures as they pass. This takes place in the afternoon, and is followed by the departure of the bride. A crowd of women and children press into the room to see how she looks in her finery. The older women have bathed her the evening before, and her hands and feet have been reddened with henna. Her marriageable friends, in order to share her luck, have pinched her thighs. The procession can now begin. 585 [302 789]

The bride is hidden by red or white veils, and rides on a camel or in an old motorcar. Two or three women relatives go with her under the canopy. The men fire shots into the air (an Arab custom), while shrill tremolo cries (*zaghârît*) alternate with songs from the women. [152]

3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
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Copts MR10

APPENDIX A

A NOTE ON MOURNING CUSTOMS

Both Christians and Moslems, at the feasts of Christmas and Easter, or the Little and Great Bairam (*), have a custom of going to pray at the tombs of their dead. On these days the cemetery takes on the appearance of a market, in which people of all conditions meet together. Families are continuously arriving. The camel is used to transport the provisions, bedding, boxes and kitchen-ware. Sometimes the Nile has to be crossed. The people crowd pell-mell into ferry boats, weighing them down till they are almost awash. The children, with their best clothes on, are delighted with the journey, but the women are weeping. When they visit the cemetery for the first time after a burial they cry out in grief, calling on the dead. Some of them stain their faces with blue and wave their handkerchiefs. I have seen old women scarcely able to walk and broken down by age and sickness, dragging themselves on this funeral pilgrimage, which they feel obliged to make, and from which they may never return.

C F 765 769 C F 292 505 C F 152 302 987 ●

Then the blood of sacrifice flows over the tomb, and the meat is given to the poor. Such libations and charitable offerings are supposed to comfort the souls of the dead. The goats and sheep, feeling their end approaching, cry aloud in despair. Yet in the dazzling sunshine, the clouds of dust, the tumult of the crowd, there is something of the holiday spirit. Hawkers temptingly display their wares, little cafés are opened, swings draw the children away. The families separate, each to visit its own. The upper part of the tomb is often built into a dome or living-space. Here the family will settle itself, to weep for hour after hour, or to sleep. Happy are the dead who are remembered, and happier still those for whom prayers are said.

C F 782 C F 265 443 764

When someone dies in the village, there is always a *mandara* (sitting-room) or a tent where the people go to offer

C F 764

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[464
857]

and even prejudicial to their health". LA PATRIE (a Cairo newspaper), 10th November 1936.

26. AL-MUSSAWAR, Cairo, 28th June 1935.

[651] 27. "Every male above 9 years and below 25 years of age who is accustomed to agricultural labour may be levied for such labour by the administrative authorities at the wage customary in the locality."

[249 136] 28. GELECHIA GOSSYPIELLA SAUNDERS. The boll-worm properly so called is EARIAS INSULANA, and the leaf-worm, also a great pest, is PRODENIA LITURA F.

[465] 29. Proclamation No. 258 of 1942 fixed the minimum wage for this type of work at 7½ piastres a day.

30. Between 1942 and 1945 some rises occurred in wage rates, while the official cost-of-living index rose to 300 (1939-100).

[249] 31. One feddan produces from 4 to 5 CANTARS of cotton, according to the quality of the seed. In 1936 there was a record average of 6.16 CANTARS.

32. AL-AHRAM, 3.11.36. It should be noted that over-population affects the relation between supply and demand.

[426 735] 33. The solution proposed by the authorities is that the Government should take over debts to money-lenders and deduct a small amount from the fellah's annual revenues until they are paid off.

34. Ernest Chantre : RECHERCHES ANTHROPOLOGIQUES EN EGYPTE : Rey, Lyons, 1904.

35. J. de Morgan : RECHERCHES SUR L'ORIGINE DES EGYPTIENS : Leroux, Paris, 1909.

36. Dr. Abbas Pasha: FIXITÉ DE LA RACE DANS LA FEMME EGYPTIENNE : BULLETIN OF ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, Cairo, Vol. VI, pp. 461-70.

37. Vonderheyden : LE HENNÉ CHEZ LES MUSULMANS DE L'AFRIQUE DU NORD : JOURNAL DES AFRICANISTES, Paris, 1934, Vol. IV, pp. 55-61 and 179-202.

[302] 38. There are various formulae, but the commonest have an antimony base, with an admixture of charcoal, lamp-black or soot.

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

The manner of the act was (for the *Shaikha*) to go with the unfortunate woman, whose husband had been turned from her, to a region far from sight where the " operator " (*mushabshiba*) dyes her face and her hands with a black substance and puts on black clothing, and lets her hair down upon her shoulder and grasps in her hand three fruits. Then she takes the " patient " (*mushabshab lahā*) by her side and burns incense, placing in it *hashīsh* and *'anzarūt* (or *Anzarūt*)[1] and *mansir* (?) or *mānistir* (?) and *faḥīsala* (I do not know its real medical name). Thereafter she says :

Yā 'afārīt yā 'afārīt	Oh, Spirits ! Oh, Spirits !
Yā ginn al-gibāl	Oh, Jinn of the Mountains !
Yā sukkān al-buhūr	Oh, dwellers of the seas !
Yā 'ummār al-burūr	Oh, inhabitants of lands !
Yā bu'ād fi'l-barrīya	Oh, far off folk in the desert !
Yā ḳātilīn al-darrīya[2]	Oh, slayers of offspring !
Yā mukhālifīn Sulīmān	Oh, oppcnents of Solomon[3]
Yā mubarṭi'īn fi'l-widyān	Oh, gallopers in valleys !

I cry to you. Come to me, and help me with the stars of the sky.

Then it is said that the atmosphere becomes dusty and the day is changed to night, and the darkness becomes intensified, while she continues her spell, saying :

Good evening to you, oh, stars of evening ! Oh, yellow ones like apricots ! I have smitten him with three fruits (*thamarāt*) smite ye him with three live coals (*jamarāt*). (Thereupon she names the person in the case, and casts the fruits upon an image [p. 5] of the person made of clay which is in front of her). One ember will come upon his eyes so that he will see none but her [i.e. his forsaken wife] ; and an ember upon his tongue so that he will speak with none but her ; and an ember upon his ears so that he will listen to none but her. Good

[1] [Gum of a thorny tree that grows in the mountains of Persia. See the *Tadhkara* of Dā'ūd al-Anṭākī, s.v. According to Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires arabes*, it is *trifolium odoratum*. Tr.]

[2] [i.e. *al-Dharriya*.]

[3] [These are the Jinn who, according to Moslem legends, were forced to assist King Solomon in his works of magic. Tr.]

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302
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Photograph by the author.

محمود محمد العتر

Maḥmûd Moḥammed el-'Itr
Watchman of the Administration of Antiquities in the Desert of Saqqāra.

[p.ii] [p.iii is blank]

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53.

To Vain Beauties.

x 539
● 302

Why wish to touch up natural beauty by artificial means?

El-ʿēn sōda min Alla,
wil-koḥl lāḥir lē?
wil-ḫadd aḥmar min Alla,
wil-ḥosn-Yūsif lē?

The eye is black from Allah,
Wherefore then the eye-paint?
And the cheek is red from Allah,
Wherefore then Joseph's-beauty"?

2. Their black, shining eyes are the pride of the Egyptian women. Eye-paint (koḥl) is the well-known, black, coloring matter, which is used to day, as in ancient Egypt, to blacken the edges of the eyelids. The peasant-women often disagreeably overdo it.

4. "Joseph's-beauty" is the name of a red cosmetic (compare Klunzinger p. 184). Joseph is often mentioned as an ideal of beauty.

The Charmer.

93.

Ya bēḍa, koḥlik sabāni
u-ʿala-l-ḥabāib u-ramāni.
libiset ʿuṣēbe wimradde,
witmaiyilet ʿal-muḥadde.
sabbalit ʿiyūn el-muḥabbe,
ma laḥeʾtiš alaggam ḥoṣāni.

[302] O maiden white, thine eye-paint hath taken me prisoner
And cast me with those who love (thee).
She wore a fillet and a gay-colored bodice,
And leaned upon the cushion.
She drooped her alluring eyes, —
Then I had no time to curb my steed.

1. We would say: Thy beautifully painted eyes have fettered me.

2. Compare with this strange construction in the Arabic, No. 5, l. 2.

[291] 3. The ʿuṣēbe is a little scarf, which is wound about the head like a fillet. The meradde is the gay-colored front of a vest-like garment.

4. She sends him an alluring, languishing glance from her half-closed eyes.

106.

"Love ... is not Provoked."

539x 152

Jealous women attempt to blacken a lover in the eyes of his sweetheart.

En-nās ʾālû-li: ḥabībik kwoiyis —
ʾultē: ai, ma-lo?
ʾālu-mḥanni yemīno —
ʾultē: wi-šmālo!
ʾālu: beyiʾlaʿ u-yilbis —
ʾultē: mim-malo!
ʾālu: beyākul melabbis —
ʾultē: haniyâ-lo!
ʾālu: da fī er-radīye —
ʾultē: mīn ṭālo?
Rāḥu, ya ʿawāzil,
u-baṭṭalu di-l-ʾōl!
illa maʿâ laḥs,
yirmi kullē min ṭālo!

People said to me: Thy lover is handsome —
I said: Yes, what is the matter with him?
They said: He colors his right hand with henna — [302]
I said: His left also!
They said: He makes many changes in his dress —

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I said: With his own money!
They said: He eats sweets —
I said: May they agree with him!
They said: He is ill-natured —
I said: Who has laid hold of him?
Be gone, you jealous creatures,
And cease your talk!
Unless you do, you will learn that his glance
Vanquishes everyone who lays hold of him!

[302]
[157]

1. He is an effeminate fop! The dyeing of certain portions of the hands and feet, with the leaves of the henna shrub (Lawsonia inermis), customary among the women and children, is considered, when practiced by men, a sign of effeminacy.

5. He is a dandy.

7. He has a sweet-tooth.

10. That is to say: Who provoked him? He must have had cause for being unpleasant. Maḥmûd interpreted this line as: "min fikum misik fi" that is to say, "Which of you has laid hold of him."

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527 trifle, since games of chance are strictly forbidden by the
524 Mohammedan religion, as well as wine and fermented liquors
[179 generally. The loser is often jeered, and has his forehead
213] stamped with his own seal as a mark of disgrace; but if he then beats his opponent the latter has to wipe off the mark with his own robe, and is marked by the other.

527 Next day a grand *Fantasie* is held (a general name given
[533] by the Arabs to an entertainment where anything merry is
[535] to be seen or heard) in the form of a dance with music and singing. Such an entertainment has little resemblance to a Frankish ball, which has accordingly preserved its own special name of *balo*. In the court, or the space in front of the house, even though this be the street, carpets and straw mats are spread, benches are placed, and many-branched candelabra and brilliant paper lanterns or oil-lamps with coloured [354] water are suspended above the scene of the nocturnal festivities. Soon after night-prayer everybody flocks to the spot, high and low, young and old, invited and uninvited. A number
527 of dancing-girls step up. They take off their street mantles
535 and display themselves in their richest attire, from the gold-
[292 embroidered skull-cap, and gold trinkets round the neck and
301] over the heart, to the silken bows upon the polished boots; but on such a public occasion there is no impropriety. The dancing-girls of the ancient Egyptians appear to have worn a very transparent dress; they also are often represented as quite naked; even the short skirts of the modern ballet-girl are seen in some representations. The hair of our dancing-
[302] girls smoothed, oiled, and plaited, their dotted faces, their rich and gaudy dresses—all is faultless. The childish forms seem to have become filled out, the haggard faces under the mystic half light of the illumined darkness and the effects of the "Joseph's beauty" (rouge) have recovered their youthful freshness; the really pretty have become charming. The
533 orchestra has already taken up its position on the ground;
534 some gray-bearded fathers are strumming on the two strings
527 of their spindle-shaped fiddles; a [illegible]y musician blows the reed-clarionet; matrons with buckram voices sing to plaintive tunes, beat hand kettle-drums and swing cymbals or tam-

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585 Under the red glow of crackling pitch torches, amid the unme-
[372] lodious noise of copper hand-drums, the joyful toot of a double
[534] reed-pipe, and the hymns chanted by the schoolmasters and
[533] other pillars of the faith, followed by half the inhabitants of the town, the bridegroom walks from night prayer in the mosque to his own dwelling. Here the procession halts. The singers form a ring and sing around the hero of the wedding, for whom the marriage torches form an illumination. A transparent vernal down is springing on his full smooth cheeks, his stature gives hope that he will grow for some years still, his voice as it is heard now and then sounds childishly delicate, or struggles painfully with the voice of manhood. The
[290] immature form of the youth is clothed in a coat of scarlet cloth, for the first time the manly turban rises on his head, and by his side hangs the marriage sword. Solemnly, seriously, and slowly he paces onwards in the midst of a few of his companions. The procession halts before this or that house, and the chief personages and musicians are regaled with sweetened coffee and sherbet, musket shots sound in the stillness of night, till at last his father's house is reached. Hither the bride has already come in another direction from the
[292] house of her parents, from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot enveloped in a Cashmere shawl, which, like the red coat of the bridegroom, is generally borrowed for this day only. She is embraced, and almost carried by two wives, and followed by a crowd of women and girls uttering cries of joy. The house of feasting is lighted up outside with gay lamps and lanterns, and here the people amuse themselves with the dancing-girls, singers, and buffoons, or, if more seriously disposed, listen to the mysterious words of the Koran, or tire themselves out in zikrs, while the bridegroom mounts to the chambers of the women, and lifts the veil of her who has been chosen for him, and whom he has never yet seen, unless, tormented by impatience, he has already, on the occasion of the procession from the mosque, gone through this momentous proceeding in the house of the bride. There she stands before
● [302] him, the little, tender, lovely maiden, her eyes deeply black-
[301] ened with kohl, her hands coloured red, her face dotted over

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with beauty-spots, her tender limbs can scarcely support all her heavy ornaments of gold and silver, her armlets, bracelets, anklets, crown, hair-chains, and other trinkets. The silken jacket falls smoothly over her breast, that scarcely as yet shows any swelling. The doll-bride blushes in childish modesty, and, instead of her husband, not seldom wishes—her playthings. He, however, intimates to her, in the name of God, the all-merciful, that he has become her husband. If the bridegroom has had reason to be satisfied with his bride, the women who have been in attendance on the pair utter cries of pleasure, and the joy passes through the whole house, and extends to the people collected below. Ceremonies very similar were customary in the middle ages also among our German forefathers.

Early on the morning after this "night of access" there is much congratulation in the house of feasting; the guests receive coffee, and are sprinkled with rose-water, which they rub on their hair, their beards, faces, and hands. The ancient Egyptians used to anoint themselves with ointments, but this is no longer practised. On this day the bridegroom takes a walk in the open air in his red coat with some of his comrades and sings pious songs; for three days or more he goes about without engaging in any occupation, and at this time displays an extraordinarily serious mien.

A man that marries a second time invites only his nearer relatives and friends, or a scribe, to the betrothal feast in his house. Thereupon the marriage contract is drawn up, the dowry paid, a prayer uttered, and he has now free access to his betrothed.

FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

A shrill cry, as loud as the female falsetto can produce, pierces the air, first one, then another, then several, then ever so many. A soul has departed. The cry was the wail of sorrow uttered by the women concerned, and at the same time the signal which brings up crowds of women to lament along with them. On the street, before the house of mourn-